

**Oklahoma State University
University Research Compliance**

**Final Disposition of Live Research Animals Purposely Exposed to
Biohazardous Materials**

PURPOSE

The following procedures are the product of the joint efforts of the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) and Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) and are aimed at providing reasonable methods for disposal of OSU-owned research animals that have been utilized in projects involving biohazardous materials (i.e., pathogens, biologically-derived toxins, and recombinant or synthetic nucleic acids). In some cases, animals may be eligible for sale, adoption or other disposition. In every circumstance, OSU will adhere to all animal use laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines.

ADMINISTRATION

This policy applies to all animals used, housed, or maintained by OSU faculty, staff, or students for use in research involving biological materials that are the property of the University. The IBC and IACUC share decision-making authority for final disposition of research animals purposely exposed to biohazardous materials. If the committees are unable to agree on the final disposition of animals used in a specific project, a small sub-committee consisting of IBC and IACUC members may meet to review project details in order to reach a consensus for review and approval by both committees. If the committees are unable to reach an agreement on appropriate disposition of the animals used in the project, the principal investigator (PI) will not be approved to conduct the research.

PROCEDURES

The proposed disposition of animals that have been utilized in projects involving biohazardous materials must be clearly stated in the Animal Care and Use and IBC protocols associated with the project. The described disposition will be approved or denied by the IACUC and IBC as part of the project approval process. If animals are to be sold, adopted out, or transferred to individuals or organizations outside of the University, the treatments and/or testing performed to ensure that the animals are no longer infectious or biohazardous must be clearly described in the protocols and approved by both the IBC and the IACUC. At the close of the project, documentation of the treatments and/or results of the diagnostic testing must be reviewed by the University's Attending Veterinarian or his/her designee before the animals are released for slaughter, sale, adoption, or transfer to another research institution.

Whenever possible and appropriate, animals should be transferred to other OSU IACUC-approved protocols. If the animals are no longer appropriate for use in other efforts, they may be disposed of by the following methods:

- humane euthanasia as described in the most current edition of the *American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals (AVMA Guidelines)*;
- humane slaughter in accordance with the procedures listed below;

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- sale in accordance with the procedures listed below;
- adoption in accordance with the procedures listed below; or
- transfer to another research facility in accordance with the procedures listed below.

A. Euthanasia –

Research animals which have been utilized in projects involving serious human/animal pathogens or toxins are not appropriate for slaughter, sale, or adoption. These animals are to be euthanized by methods described in the *AVMA Guidelines*.

B. Slaughter –

Animals which have been utilized in projects involving biohazardous materials may be sent to slaughter provided that:

- the animals are not transgenic;
- the animals have not been exposed to a pathogen or toxin that may produce deleterious effects should it enter the food supply (e.g., foodborne human pathogens, etc.);
- the animals are generally fit for consumption; and
- the animals do not pose a danger to other animals while in transit to slaughter.

In all cases, processing plant officials should be advised of the research in which the animal was utilized and any associated risks.

C. Sale, Adoption, or Transfer to Another Research Facility –

Animals which are no longer appropriate for use in research or teaching activities at OSU may be sold, adopted, or transferred to another institution provided that:

- the animals have not been infected with a serious human pathogen;
- the animals have not been infected with a serious animal pathogen that may be spread to other animals; and
- the animals are in generally good health and are no longer infectious to either humans or other animals as determined by the treatment and/or testing procedures described in the associated IBC and IACUC protocols.

Special procedures:

1. Prior to sale, adoption or transfer of a research animal that has been exposed to pathogens the PI must, in accordance with the applicable IBC and IACUC protocols, obtain third-party verification that the animal is free of the pathogen.
2. The University's Attending Veterinarian or his/her designee must review and sign a completed [Animal Health Release](#), which documents the results of testing performed to ensure that the animals are no longer infectious or biohazardous, before the animal is released for sale, adoption, or transfer.
3. The recipient must be advised of the research in which the animal was involved and any associated risks.
4. The recipient must complete an [Animal Release & Transfer of Liability form](#) accepting sole responsibility for the animal.
5. The PI must send copies of all completed forms to the Biosafety Office where they will be retained with the corresponding IBC protocol file.